20210817 Joshua 7 Learning the Lessons from The Mistakes we Make

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We'll Always Have Battles, but He gives us Something to Battle with

Will we ever get out of these battles that we're in? I'm sorry to tell you "no".
We once again see the chronicle of Israel coming into the Promised Land. They've crossed over the Jordan and they now are facing the battles of taking the land. They put their faith in the promises of God.

Symbols of How We Walk in Our Relationship With Jesus Christ

Last week we looked at Jericho, which was symbolic of us walking in our relationship with Jesus Christ, taking hold of the promises of God, and . All kinds of things get in our way. Depression, loneliness, discouragement etc are the battles that we fight to stay clowe to the Lord.

We all have battles just getting to church or spending time in prayer. It's just like we have one problem with the other. We then get saved and we're freed from bondage and we have Canaan Land living out in front of us. We often end up wandering in the wilderness, but we make a decision to stop being a wildnerness Christan and we cross the Jordan and we go into the promised land. It is our inheritance.

We Have to Do Our Part

Even in the fall of Jericho, they had to take up their swords, shields, and spears and they had to do hand-to-hand, house-to-house combat. They were there looking at that walled city. I have my own Jerichos and I'm sure that you have yours. I get discouraged by it and I have to put my faith and trust in Him again and again. We have to step out and take the inheritance that He has given us. We can walk free of our flesh and free of the world trying to tell us what to do and how to do it.

All Christians have to go through battles and face hardships. That's what the Christian life is made of. We're either just going into a battle or we're just coming out of the battle. Don't judge your life by the struggle. Sadly, sometimes we fall to the flesh or the world. Defeat isn't fun. But what is important is to learn the lessons from the mistakes that we make. We have to own up to our mistakes, learn from them and move on.

But the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully <u>regarding the things designated for destruction,</u> for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some of the designated things; therefore the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel.(Joshua 7)

God told them that the first fruits of the first city all belonged to God. They were the devoted things that were devoted to the Lord. So, Achan took things that weren't his. Joshua sent men to Ai (east of Bethel).

2 Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." So the men went up and spied out Ai. 3 Then they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not have all the people go up; have only about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai; do not trouble all the people there, for they are few."

They went up there and spied and told him, "This one's gonna be easy".

4 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled from the men of Ai. 5 And the men of Ai struck and killed about thirty-six of their men, and pursued them from the gate as far as Shebarim and struck them on the mountainside; and the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

The people got up there and got a paddling. They had just had that incredible victory at Jericho and there were trembling. Let's look at what Joshua did.

6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the ground on his face before the ark of the LORD until the evening, both he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. 7 And Joshua said, "Oh, Lord GOD! Why did You ever bring this people across the Jordan, only to hand us over to the Amorites, to eliminate us? If only we had been willing to live beyond the Jordan! 8 O Lord, what can I say since Israel has turned their back before their enemies? 9 For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear about it, and they will surround us and eliminate our name from the earth. And what will You do for Your great name?"

Joshua is sort of arguing with God and he's telling God that this is going to get out. It's going to make Israel look bad, and it will give God a bad reputation. They would probably mock God's name and ridicule the Name of the Lord. This sounds a lot like the

grumbling back in the wilderness when the children of Israel said to Moses, "You brought us out here in the desert to die!"

10 So the LORD said to Joshua, "Stand up! Why is it that you have fallen on your face?
[You think this is My fault? That I've gone back on my promises and brought you here just to make you suffer. God exposed exactly what Joshua thought. We get into this stuff that is tragic and horrible and we start thinking that God wasn't there and that He doesn't care. And there are always a lot of folks who will join in with that kind of stuff. Now look what God has to say. He's telling Joshua that there is a reason for this failure. There is sin in the camp. You're not going to be able to stand against your enemies until you get this sin gets taken care of.]

11 Israel has sinned, and they have also violated My covenant which I commanded them. And they have even taken some of the things designated for destruction, and have both stolen and kept it a secret. Furthermore, they have also put them among their own things. 12 Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become designated for destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you eliminate from your midst the things designated for destruction. 1

Joshua's first reaction was to blame God. Sin always separates. When we deal with defeat we often blame it on God. Let me be clear. You may be a born again believer and sin won't separate you from heaven, but it will separate. It will bring separation in friendships and marriages. Sin kills. It always separates. Now be careful here; don't think that all hardship is because of sin, but sin will create separation. It destroys the sweet fellowship that we are to have with the Lord.

We say, "I prayed and God didn't answer my prayer." But God told him to GET UP. He's letting Joshua know that the problem is not with God but with the people. When we're under the hammer what we really think about God is revealed. I know when I'm in pain I cry out to God and wonder where He is. God told Joshua that the people took things that they weren't supposed to take and they lied about it.

13 Stand up! Consecrate the people and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, because the LORD, the God of Israel, has said this: "There are things designated for destruction in your midst, Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you have removed the designated things from your midst." 14 So in the morning you shall come forward by your tribes. And it shall be that the tribe which the LORD selects by lot shall come forward by families, and the family which the LORD selects shall come forward by

households, and the household which the LORD selects shall come forward man by man.
15 And it shall be that the one who is selected with the things designated for destruction
shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has violated the
covenant of the LORD, and because he has committed a disgraceful thing in Israel.'"

This is pretty tough stuff.

6 So Joshua got up early in the morning and brought Israel forward by tribes, and the
tribe of Judah was selected. 17 So he brought the family of Judah forward, and he
selected the family of the Zerahites; then he brought the family of the Zerahites forward
man by man, and Zabdi was selected. 18 And he brought his household forward man by
man; and Achan, son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was
selected. 19 Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I implore you, give glory to the LORD,
the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and tell me now what you have done. Do not
hide it from me." 20 So Achan answered Joshua and said, "Truly, I have sinned against the
LORD, the God of Israel, and this is what I did: 21 when I saw among the spoils a beautiful
robe from Shinar, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight,
then I wanted them and took them; and behold, they are hidden in the ground inside
my tent, with the silver underneath."

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and behold, it was hidden in his
tent with the silver underneath it. 23 So they took them from inside the tent and brought
them to Joshua and to all the sons of Israel; and they laid them out before the LORD.
24 Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the robe,
the bar of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all
that belonged to him; and they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. 25 And Joshua
said, "Why have you brought disaster on us? The LORD will bring disaster on you this
day." And all Israel stoned them with stones; and they burned them with fire after they
had stoned them with stones. 26 Then they erected over him a large heap of stones that
stands to this day, and the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the
name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.

Sin has consequences. Sin creates separation. There is one thing to experience defeat. It is another thing to learn from what we do. Reasons for defeat:

Self-Confidence – "Let's just send a few…..we've got this one". The text tells us a lot about their whole attitude. They mistakenly believed that they had something to do with the taking of Jericho. But, they had forgotten that God flattened the walls. We should be cautious when we come off of a mountain top. It is in our weakness that we are strong in the Lord. We've got to remember that we are not strong. That little town of Ai had them on the mat. *"Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me." (2 Cor 12:9 NIV).* We have to pray as much after victories as we do going into battles. We should never look at sin and think "I'm too strong now to fall to that". Instead we should say, "Lord, I'm weak but YOU are strong. In YOU I have been given the victory over this sin in my life."

I Christ alone is my victory. Let him who

1 Being arrogant & self-confident -

2 Prayerlessness – remember God came and gave Joshua a battle plan but in Ai, Joshua didn't go spend time with the Lord. Joshua instead sized up the battle field himself. Joshua did what his parents had done when they walked by sight and not by faith.

Our Bibles say, "Trust in the Lord withall your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." We must take time to pray.

3 Issue of disobedience – we know that Achan was the guy that coveted and stole what he wasn't supposed to, and from this ONE MAN we see the defeat of entire army and the defeat of the nation. Strangely when God spoke to Israel, He said, "Israel has sinned". (see verse 11). THEY have transgressed my covenant, taken stolen things, etc.

Sin affects the whole community. How we live affects the community. IF someone's doing something they shouldn't be doing it can really affect all of us. Let me give and example.

4 Here's the good news from Romans chapter 5 *"12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and*

so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned— [13] for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not counted against anyone when there is no law. [14] Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the violation committed by Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.